

Dear friends!

It is unbelievable. December 2008, this means that we are now already since almost 10 months back in Brazil and it is almost one year ago that I was caught in Changsha in the snowstorm.

## What is new in Campinas?

Not a lot to be honest. We spent most of the time completing our house with additional furniture, Maria's workshop where she works on her pictures and other art received a brand-new cabinet to store all her material. We also contracted our carpenter to build us an exact copy of our living room cabinet we had in China. Both cabinets are great, and we finally have enough place to store all of our stuff.

We had also some churrascos (BBQ) at our house. One with all our friends from the off-road trips. Unfortunately we did not get the chance to do a lot of trips this year, but we are already planning for carnival season.



Another BBQ with all of my new colleagues from the controlling department at the Campinas 2 plant.

Some new pets have joined our house, actually there lived here before we moved in, therefore it is probably more their house than ours ... There is Wanda and Vigor, two lizards, each about half a meter (three feet) long. Vigor unfortunately lost his tail some weeks ago (fight?) and is not doing so well, but we all hope he will recover soon.



And then there is Zeimoglu, our small lizard who lives behind our living room curtain most of the time.



*On the left our original Zeimoglu, right what he might look like when we know him better ... ☺*



### **Copacabana Palace Hotel:**

That trip has been planned for a long time, we always wanted to stay in that hotel but in the end always chose a cheaper one. Not that time and we booked a weekend at the top of the line, directly at the Copacabana located hotel. All the beautiful and rich people who come to Rio stay in this hotel, actually Madonna stayed there last week when she started her Brazil tour in Rio de Janeiro. To make

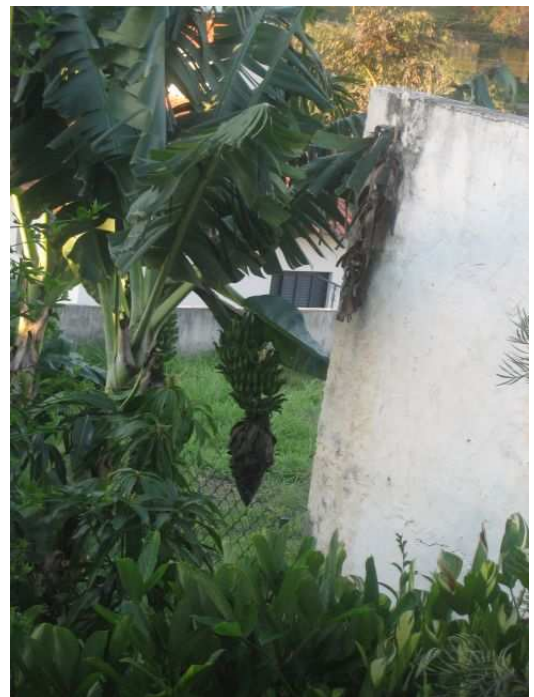


a long story short: It was like always when you expect something extraordinary: Nice but not overwhelming. At least now we can say: We spent a weekend at the Copacabana Palace ...

This time – I think it was our 5<sup>th</sup> or 6<sup>th</sup> visit to Rio – I finally also had a chance to see the maracana soccer stadium.

*Copacabana palace hotel and the Maracana Soccer stadium*

**What else:** Our banana tree still got one bunch of bananas (is that the right word?) on the tree. So who comes first to visit us will get the bananas. And yes, the limes are just on time again for new Christmas Caipirinhas and the first mangos will be ripe soon.



*Left Hibiscus blossom from our backyard, right: the last bananas ...*

What is left for us to say is that we wish you all a merry Christmas and all the best for 2009.

Maria and Norbert

